

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6528

As Passed House - Amended:

February 28, 2006

Title: An act relating to authorization for the department of transportation to allow roadside tire chain installation and removal businesses on state highway rights of way.

Brief Description: Permitting roadside tire chain businesses.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Mulliken, Kastama, Benson, Oke, Esser, Berkey and Sheldon; by request of Department of Transportation).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/15/06, 2/22/06 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 2/28/06, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by House)

- Allows the Department of Transportation to issue permits to allow the installation or removal of tire chains on motor vehicles within the state highway right of way.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Murray, Chair; Wallace, Vice Chair; Woods, Ranking Minority Member; Skinner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Buck, Campbell, Clibborn, Curtis, Dickerson, Ericksen, Flannigan, Hankins, Holmquist, Hudgins, Jarrett, Kilmer, Lovick, Morris, Nixon, Rodne, Schindler, Sells, Shabro, Simpson, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

During certain weather conditions involving ice and snow, the Department of Transportation (DOT) may require vehicles traveling on mountain passes to use tire chains. Current law is silent on the practice of installing tire chains within DOT right of way and charging a fee for this service.

Other states, such as California, permit businesses that offer tire chain installation and removal services for a fee to operate in the state highway right of way.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The DOT may issue permits to allow the installation or removal of tire chains on motor vehicles within the DOT right of way. Tire chains may only be installed or removed at locations designated in the permit. A fee may be charged to drivers for this service.

The DOT may determine how many permits are desirable to provide maximum convenience and safety to traffic, and may charge a fee of no greater than \$50 for the permit. The DOT must issue the permits to the largest possible number of different individuals and entities, and, if possible, prevent a single entity from holding all the permits for a given location. The DOT must also adopt other implementation rules, including requiring permittees to wear reflective clothing and use appropriate signage.

The DOT assumes no responsibility for the actions of the permittees and is absolved of liability for permittees actions or omissions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Issuing permits for the installation or removal of tire chains in DOT's highway right of way would increase the quality and expertise of the people offering the service. It would also increase safety for people seeking the service and reduce their vulnerability. The fee should be kept low to encourage people to apply for the permits.

This bill would help keep the passes open for travel. It would only be an option, and there would still be space available for people who want to install their own chains.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Mark Johnson, Washington Retail Association; Charlie Extine, Northwest Tire Dealers Association and Washington Retail Association; and Rico Baroga, Washington Department of Transportation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.